



FRIENDS OF THE NORTHUMBERLAND STRAIT

friendsofthenorthumberlandstrait.ca | info@friendsofthenorthumberland.ca

March 2, 2018

Honorable Iain Rankin
Nova Scotia Minister of the Environment

Dear Minister Rankin:

I am writing as a member of the citizen's group Friends of the Northumberland Strait (FONS.) We are aware that you have received many letters from citizens of Pictou County and across the province who are worried about Northern Pulp's plan to pipe treated effluent into the fishing grounds of the Northumberland Strait.

In a letter responding to one concerned citizen, you stated, "I am sure you are aware that effluent from the pulp mill has been treated by the Boat Harbour effluent treatment facility and then discharged into the Northumberland Strait for the last 50 years."

Northern Pulp's communications director has said precisely the same thing. While it is not unusual for a company to downplay the risks of a proposed project, we expect a deeper understanding from the Minister of the Environment.

As citizens who live in the area, we feel your response greatly oversimplifies a complex issue. We do not find your response to be either accurate or reassuring.

Mr. Minister, we are concerned that you have not gathered independent scientific information to understand how Northern Pulp's proposed new plan differs from what has happened in the past.

In order to help you understand this complex issue more deeply, we have prepared a science-based backgrounder, [50 Years of Pulp Effluent](#), to provide you and the staff in your department with greater insight into this issue.

We ask that you consider this information fully. We hope that after reading this backgrounder you will refrain from issuing further statements implying that Northern Pulp's new proposal is of no greater risk to the fishing areas of the Northumberland Strait than the present treatment facility. **This is a key issue that the environmental assessment process has yet to resolve.**


Such statements from your office reinforce existing doubts that the environmental assessment process will be fair and unbiased. We hope that this backgrounder will underline the need for your department to gather and fully consider independent information and not merely repeat the reassurances you are given by the project's proponent.

Finally, so that there is no room for misunderstanding, Friends of the Northumberland Strait fully supports the closure of Boat Harbour treatment facility and the clean-up of Boat Harbour on schedule.

Please feel free to contact us if you would like to discuss this issue further.

In hopes that you will fulfill your stated first priority to protect the environment,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jill Graham-Scanlan".

Jill Graham-Scanlan
for Friends of the Northumberland Strait
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cc: Premier Stephen MacNeil

Attached
50 Years of Pulp
Jan. 16 response to concerned citizen from Minister Rankin